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THE DAY BOOK

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STATE STREET STORES IN CONSPIRACY WITH BIG BUSINESS TO KILL WAGE INQUIRY

*Lehman, Cornered, Admits Association of Stores—Lieut.
Gov. O'Hara Charges Millionaires Held Secret
Meeting to Decide What Testimony to Give.*

By Don MacGregor.

The State street department stores, as a body, joined in the conspiracy of Big Business to choke off the low wages investigation of the senate white slave commission.

This was brought out by Lieutenant Governor Barratt O'Hara at the session of the commission held in the crowded red room of the Hotel LaSalle yesterday afternoon.

The realization that the stores had so feared an exposure of their swollen profits and low wages that they had met together and conspired to deny the demand of the people of Illinois for justice startled every person at the hearing.

All day long the crowd had sat there, rather listlessly—millionaires in the front row; magazine writers in the next; and the women of the missions, the politicians, and the merely curious behind them.

The millionaires had sneered at the pointed questions of the commissioners; the magazine writers had scribbled busily; the women of the missions,

Surely there is no more pitiful thing than to hear a woman sneer at one of her fallen sisters. . . . Yet they did it yesterday, and the ones who did it called themselves missionaries, and used the name of Christ as they sneered. . . .

When W. C. Thorne, vice president of Montgomery Ward & Co., pompously took the stand and slurred the womanhood of Illinois, a sort of hush fell over the room. The silence was broken by a woman's cold voice.

"It's absurd," she said. "Any girl

can live on \$4 a week quite easily."

And the woman who said that is connected with the Florence Crittenden home.

"Dapper Jimmie" Simpson had defied the people of Illinois again by once more refusing to tell how much Marshall Field had made out of them the last year.

Joseph Basch, of Siegel Cooper & Co., had taken the stand, and had squirmed and dodged and evaded like a slippery eel, until the whole room laughed at him.

Thorne followed Basch. Thorne was the first sensation of the day.